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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

PASS TO TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (TSA) AND
GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE (GAO); DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR
S/ES-O, S/CT, EUR, DS, AND CA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TURIN 2006 WINTER OLYMPICS: USG SITUATION REPORT
(SITREP) # 6, 03/15/2006

REF: ROME 000806

¶11. (SBU) The following cable provides information on security, public diplomacy, and consular activities in Turin, Italy, for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games.

¶12. (SBU) The interagency Olympic Security Coordination (OSC) Office can be contacted on a 24-hour basis at the following numbers:

USG Joint Operations Center (JOC): 39-011-55-99-793/794/564
(tel); 011-39-011-55-99-590 (fax)

USG Threat Integration Center (TIC): 39-011-55-99-790/791
(tel); 011-39-011-55-99-590 (fax).

¶13. (SBU) Attached is a key for USG acronyms used within this cable: the inter-agency Olympic Security Coordination Office (OSC); the USG inter-agency Olympic Security Operations Center OSOC, including the 24/7 Joint Operations Center (JOC) and Threat Integration Center (TIC); the National Information Center for the Winter Olympics (CNIO), which is a Government of Italy (GOI) hosted multinational center; the Turin Olympics Organizing Committee (TOROC); the International Olympics Committee (IOC); the US Olympic Committee (USOC); European high-speed train project that is controversial in mountain towns near Olympics sites (TAV - Italian acronym); the Transportation Security Administration (TSA); Public Affairs/Public Diplomacy (PA/PD); Consular Affairs (CA); and the Italian Ministry of Interior (MOI).

KEY POINTS

¶14. (U) The Paralympics continue without disturbances. U.S. participation highlights: In her first Paralympic Winter Games, Laurie Stephens earned two gold medals in as many races. Following her gold-worthy downhill race on Sunday, Stephens finished on top in March 14 Super-G. In the men's field, Nick Catanzarite led the Americans with a fourth place finish, .08 seconds away from the Bronze medal. Ten physically disabled children from the U.S. are visiting as part of the International Paralympic Academy. This is a private organization supported by the U.S. Paralympic Committee to encourage interest in Olympic-level sports among disabled children; it is active in 30 states. An American citizen who was charged with causing an avalanche while skiing in the mountains near Turin in February inquired if Consulate Milan could influence the adjudication of his case. Consular officer advised the Amcit that the Consulate does not interfere with judicial proceedings, and that he should follow the advice of his attorney. According to the attorney, no charges have been filed against his client as of March 10, 2006. (See Consular Section, paragraph 13.)

SECURITY ISSUES

¶15. (U) Terrorist Activity: No activity has been identified.
¶16. (SBU) Threats: There is no credible, specific information suggesting that terrorists intend to target the Paralympics.
¶17. (U) Demonstrations: The OSC is not aware of any scheduled protests or plans to disrupt the Paralympics. Italian authorities remain on heightened alert throughout Turin to ensure the safety of spectators, athletes, and VIPs attending the Games.

¶18. (U) The USG interagency OSC, JOC, and TIC operates seven days a week from 0800 to 1700 hours. The hours of operation will be extended to include any night events.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

19. (U) Italian media coverage of the Paralympics reported that Italy won its first gold medal March 14, in the Men's Super-G. The gold medalist reportedly only has 10 percent of his eyesight. Another Italian Paralympian, Silvia Parente won her second bronze medal in the Women's Super-G. Overall coverage in the Italian media remains light, focused on athletes. News coverage is dominated by the political debate between current PM Berlusconi and his primary rival, Romano Prodi.

10.(U) Milan-based center right daily Corriere de la Sera carried an article on the German Paralympic team. The article reports that their Paralympic athletes are demanding better pay to support their training.

11. (U) An article in the Turin-based centrist daily La Stampa discussed a proposal by Italy to have a sailing event for the disabled at the America's Cup in 2008. The proposal is supported by a sailing club in Pinerolo (outside Turin) as well as NGO SailAbility Italia, the city of Turin, and a sailing club affiliated with Milan Polytechnic University.

12. (U) U.S. highlights from the Paralympics.

1A. There are 56 US athletes competing in the Paralympics. The state producing the most athletes is Colorado (12), followed by New York (8).

1B. Youngest Paralympian is 16-year-old James Connolly from Galloway, N.J. Connolly plays on the U.S. sled hockey team. Six of the U.S. athletes are in high school.

1C. Wheelchair curler Wes Smith from Glenburn, Maine at 65-years-old is the oldest Paralympian.

1D. A number of athletes are returning Paralympians. The most appearances go to US Paralympian Candace Cable, a Nordic skier from Truckee, California. This is her fifth Winter Games and she also competed in five Summer Games. Runner-up goes to US Paralympian, Reed Robinson, an alpine skier from Incline Village, Nevada. This is her sixth appearance at the Winter Games.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

13. (U) Consular Section Turin had one action for Tuesday, March 14. An American citizen who is accused of causing an avalanche while skiing near Turin in February (previously reported in Olympics sitrep) has requested information whether Consulate Milan could influence the adjudication of his case. The American citizen was advised that the USG does not interfere with judicial proceedings, and that he should follow the advice of his attorney. The attorney has reportedly indicated that no formal charges have been filed against his client as of March 10.

14. (U) The Consular Office for the duration of the Paralympics is co-located with in the same building as the OSC and Olympics Coordination Office in Turin. Four staff members and one consular officer comprise the Consular Section. The office is open from

0900 to 1800 hours. The office provides emergency services for US citizens and has established an extensive network of contacts with hotels, hospitals, and local law enforcement officials. Contact information: Telephone number: 011-5599-330. FAX: 011-5599-551. Additional information may be found at <HTTP://Milan.USConsulate.Gov>.

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